

credit given for them. The doctors usually prefer the moist borated gauze for sponges and dressings during labor, so no other provision is made.

From this box are always used the lysol, green soap, bichloride tablets, alboline and boracic acid, but the catheters and hypodermic tablets, ergot and other possibly necessary things are there to be used if needed. Three or four dollars usually covers the expense in drugs.

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## OLD BELLEVUE

*(Founded on Fact)*

By SR. M. MERCEDES

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It was on one summer evening, long ago, 1881, I think. The night nurse, Miss Watson, had just come on for the night and had been attracted to Ward Two, the boys' surgical, by suspicious noises. By good rights they should have been all in bed and sleeping the sound sleep given to all good boys, but who ever knew boys to be asleep on a summer evening at eight o'clock? There was one comfort, however, when once asleep they might as well have been out of the hospital for all the trouble they gave until morning. The boys, as has been said, were surgical cases and in pretty fair condition physically.

Miss Watson found the ward the picture of neatness, quiet, and order, with the twilight streaming at either end of the ward. But this did not in the least deceive her, she had been there before. She had heard a boot go whizzing across the ward and sounds of suppressed laughter before coming in and she knew, moreover, just where to place it. Crossing the ward she went up to a bed near the door, which led into Ward One, the men's surgical, and placed her hand on a red, curly head, exclaiming as she did so:

"Now, Timothy Reardon!" then changing her tone she went on: "Your hair is still wet from your bath. I thought all you boys had your hair cut this morning."

"Fritz said," giggled a boy opposite, "that he didn't dare to cut Tim's hair for fear 't would set the hospital on fire."

"Just you wait!" threatened Tim vindictively.

Then there was silence, for all heard the measured tread of the stretcher man bringing in a case to Ward One. As they passed through, the boys saw that an immense man lay on the stretcher with that quiet

immovableness that can only come when life has nearly departed. Walking beside it was a little woman shaking with suppressed sobs, while behind a policeman followed closely.

"A cop!" gasped the boys as the sad little procession passed on through the door into Ward One.

"Now what did I tell you," said Miss Watson, "Mr. O'Rourke, the warden, has had to send for the police to bring order into this ward and if I hear another sound in here to-night I will tell the officer to take half a dozen of you down to the Tombs in his 'Black Maria' which is standing out there in the yard waiting for you."

The lads, evidently thinking the matter had become serious, curled down in their beds and set themselves in earnest to the business of going to sleep, and Miss Watson, who was night nurse on all the first surgical division, passed into Ward One.

They tell me there are great changes in the old hospital and I know not if Ward One is even in existence now, but in those days it was a bright, sunny ward with French windows running down to the floor. They were behind the row of men's beds and looked out on the East River which ran almost within a stone's throw.

The last bed on this row was surrounded by a screen and the young house doctor with the orderly, Fritz, was behind it, undressing and examining the patient, while the officer looked grimly on. The little woman, glad to see one of her own sex, came close to Miss Watson and began to pour out her tale of woe between gasps of heartbreaking sobs.

"We were only married this morning," Miss Watson gave a little exclamation of sympathy. "Yes, my man, John Morris, and I have been waiting two years, and only last week he got a letter from his brother that he had staked out a government claim for us and that we were to come right on. We were on our way to the station and were going, oh, way out west, I don't know where, when,"—a pause and choke—"well, I will tell you, a horrid, mean, dirty fellow with whom I used to keep company ever so long ago, when I was a young girl in school, came to the house after the wedding and said,"—another pause,—“well, some dreadful, insulting things and *he* threw the villain out. I was afraid, for the fellow was half-seas over, and threatened to kill us both but *he* laughed at me and then, you know, we were going away to-night. Our tickets were bought and our baggage checked and we were on our way to the station when that miserable wretch sprang out on us, and they say *he* has killed the fellow.” Here the little woman ended with a long wail. Miss Watson quieted her by reminding her that she would disturb

the patients and that they would both be wanted to help, and, as she spoke, the house doctor came out from behind the screen and called her.

"The patient has some ugly contusions but there are no bones broken and I hope he will pull through in a few days," said he, looking pityingly at the weeping woman; then he added, in a lower tone, "I suppose you see it is a criminal case; the officer will have to watch him day and night. Perhaps if he has to swing he will not thank us for pulling him through." Then after giving her some orders for the night he went out of the ward.

The orderly came out and took the screen away while the little wife flew to her husband's side and Miss Watson began to fold up the patient's clothes in an orderly parcel to be carried down to the office. She was startled at the gruff voice of the officer.

"Keep away from there," he said, taking the little woman by the arm. "I want no whispering here."

She looked at the officer of the law, her eyes full of tears like a hurt, grieved child, and he stood back rather abashed at Miss Watson's look of indignation, muttering something under his breath about orders.

"Will you please let me take his clothes home?" faltered the wife. "You see what a state they are in, and I will bring them back when I have cleaned them, not that he will ever want them, I fear."

There could be no refusal, and when she proposed leaving him his watch the patient refused, saying, "No Kit; take it with you, you will want it, but I shan't." And with another burst of tears the little woman allowed Miss Watson to lead her from the ward.

A week went on and the case in Ward One did not improve as the doctor hoped; on the contrary he grew weaker and weaker, until he could no longer even turn in bed or feed himself, his voice had sunk to a whisper and he refused all nourishment except that which was given in a condensed, fluid form, at regular intervals. His wife came and went as often as allowed, but followed the policeman's direction and sat at some distance and brought him nothing. She, too, was in deep distress and grew visibly thinner and paler as the days went on. Both had the entire sympathy of the ward, and the officer its hearty aversion.

It was dull for that policeman, especially as he found no one was inclined to be social; therefore he was delighted to find that Fritz loved a good game of checkers as well as he did, so every night after all was quiet they played until it was time for Fritz to turn in himself. At first it was close to the prisoner's bed, but the light was bad there and they saw no need of watching him so closely when a stronger power than the law, weakness, was keeping him prisoner.

A great and learned authority was one day brought in for consultation. He looked at the patient scrutinizingly, took his hand and looked at the temperature chart. "A somewhat erratic temperature," said he.

"You may well say that, doctor," said the house doctor, frowning a little, "normal all day and rising at the same hour at night, but the night nurse is sure she makes no mistake and she is one who never does; yet look, 105° at midnight, 104° two hours later, and the morning temperature 98.5°."

"Lived in a shanty off the Boulevard," murmured the chief. The reader will remember that the Boulevard was just building in those days. The older man moved off as he spoke and the younger asked saucily:

"Well; what is your diagnosis? Lived in a shanty off the Boulevard?" The reply was inaudible and the two left the ward. They were followed by the priest, who courteously greeted the head nurse and asked the usual question, "Are there any in danger of death?" "It seems to me that Morris is very weak and needs your help, Father," she said.

The priest moved down the ward and bent over the prisoner's bed. After a moment he rose and as he came out the nurse met him and asked if she should bring a screen. "Not this time, thank you," and the priest passed on with an inscrutable countenance.

The house doctor came back and stood looking at the patient with anxious eyes. "I have been thinking," he said to the nurse, "that if we shaved his head and took a surface temperature we might find some pressure on the brain."

Alas! for the poor little wife who heard him. That night, about nine o'clock, Miss Watson came into the ward, tray and glass in hand, to give the prisoner his nourishment; she saw that the officer and orderly had moved to the other end of the ward and were playing their game on the table where her book of night orders was placed. She did not like to disturb the game, so after watching them some time in silence she went up the ward, but swiftly came back with her eyes wide with astonishment. "Fritz," said she, "where is Morris?"

The two men looked at her an instant and then sprang to their feet and ran down the ward. The prisoner's bed was empty and the prisoner gone. The two dashed out of the open window. All was quiet and the yard held no one; down to the river, but that too had only the sound of ordinary traffic and, as it was a rainy, drizzly night, they could only see the fog and rain and the dark water lapping against the low wall. "We're in for it, Fritz," said the officer as the two men made their way slowly back to the hospital.

Some ten years later the house doctor had occasion to send for Miss Watson to attend a patient of his who needed special care. He complimented her on her healthy, bright appearance when he saw her. "I may rightly be well, doctor," she said, "for I have been lazy all summer up in British Columbia visiting an old patient of yours."

"Ah," said the doctor, mildly interested, "who was that?"

"Morris."

"What," shouted the doctor, "tell me all about it."

"Why the day you threatened to shave his head the little woman got desperate and went off and hunted up the man he was supposed to have killed and who, she knew, was hiding from pure malice. She persuaded him that John was dying and that it was he would have to swing, not John."

The man was thoroughly frightened and readily agreed to have a boat ready to convey them out of the city, in case the thing could be done. The signal was agreed upon and at the sound of a whistle Morris sprang from his bed and made off like a streak of white lightning."

"But the fellow was so weak."

"In your mind he was."

"But the temperature?"

"He told me that in the dark there were other ways of warming up a thermometer. I presume by a little friction of the bulb on a blanket."

"Put me down an idiot."

"We were good idiots, I think," said the nurse. "I believe the little woman's prayers blinded us supernaturally. At any rate he is now the prince of farmers and has his quiver full."

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## UNFREQUENTED PATHS

By ELSIE BOWDEN, R.N.

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PERHAPS hospitals for contagious disease attract the least attention or interest of any hospital institution, except from those individuals who have had occasion to benefit by the care and advantages they provide.

It is only of comparatively recent years that hospitals for diseases of this nature have been taken vigorously in hand, and the attempt made to raise them to the standard of other special hospitals, so that the very words "contagious hospital" is to the majority of people sufficient to conjure up visions of a gruesome or loathsome character, in which direst conditions,—bad sanitation, incompetent medical attention, unskilled